A First Time for Everything?: Asako, Iko, and Their Affections

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A First Time for Everything?: Asako, Iko, and Their Affections

by lefemmerouge2

Summary

Iku is pulled away from work in the library by her friend, and roommate, Asako Shibazaki. She is nervous, as it is her first time doing something like this, and she doesn't want to mess it up. Her friend will certainly help her out. She wants to make sure this goes right and that no one's feelings are hurt, so they can find a way, behind closed doors, to express themselves openly without anyone to judge or watch over them...

Notes

Happy National New Friends Day. This day celebrates "making room for new connections in your life, and celebrating the potential for friendship everywhere you go." Also happy belated Sweetest Day! That day (which was yesterday) celebrates being sweet by "sharing a kind thought, a small gift or a gesture of kindness," whether giving "a card with a sweet message to someone you appreciate," or even little gifts, like candy and other sweets. The vibes from both days are present in this fic, as Asako and Iko clearly care about each other in a deep way.

I started this fic in early October of this year. Although it is a stretch to say this counts asfemslash, as that refers to romantic and/or sexual relationships between women, it does fall under saffic fics, which "focus on the relationships between women," including gen stories about "other strong female bonds such as friendship, sister, rival and mother-daughter relationships." That is this fic.

I decided to use "Asako" as the first name rather than "Shibasaki." The fandom site and Wikipedia list her name as "Asako Shibazaki" rather than "Shibazaki Asako." It is also unbalanced because the other fics I've read for Library War use "Iku" rather than "Kasahara" as her first name, so the same principle should apply here. I only found two fics which list her name as Asako Shibasaki: this one and this one (written in French).

I decided to publish this fic for Flufftober 2025, to fulfill their "Make it Platonic!" challenge, particularly the Alt 7: "Can I kiss you?" prompt. I've already finished one fic for this challenge, entitled "Coming Home… For Good?: Elena's Unexpected (Royal) Roommate," which fulfills the "Alt 8. Moving in Together" prompt. I will be publishing, into late November, fics fulfilling the three other prompts for this challenge: "Alt 6. First Date," "Alt 9. Planning the Perfect Proposal," and "Alt 10. And They Lived Happily Ever After" but with *other* fandoms. My other fic for Flufftober, which I published this year, is entitled "To Be Moon Girl or Not: That is the Question." That fic is much more romantic than this one.

Otherwise, the TV Tropes page on Library War, plus the fandom pages for Asako and Iku on the Library War fandom wiki were helpful, although the latter two pages were very limited.

This fic has been cross-posted on Squidge World, Wattpad (chapter with fic is entitled "Asako, Iko, and Their Affections"), and Quotev (chapter with fic is entitled "Asako, Iko, and Their Affections"), and also on Asian Fanfiction (chapter with fic is entitled "Asako, Iko, and Their Affections").

Update on 5/7/26: I posted a revised/updated version of this fic on Squidge World, adding over 100 words, making it even stronger than the original, although I did not make it less platonic (and more romantic), change the title, nor did I make it more spicy. I hope you all check it out! I'm glad I revisited the fic.

See the end of the work for more notes

- Inspired by Leverage by Lexorisa
- Inspired by 小牧的烦恼 by chechevitsa
- Inspired by Library Wars: A Compilation of Adorable One-Shots and Short Stories by Mistydawn977
- Inspired by [Restricted Work] by SageTheWriter
- Inspired by Iku Kasahara by My Anime List
- Inspired by Asako Shibasaki by My Anime List
- Inspired by Asako Shibazaki by Library Wars: Love & War Wiki
- Inspired by Iku Kasahara by Library Wars: Love & War Wiki

Nothing got past Asako Shibasaki. Not only was she an asset to the Library Task Force, but she was drop-dead gorgeous. She put a lot of time, and effort, into how she looked. Her hair was pristine, her blue uniform pressed and ironed. Her hair, which sometimes looked black, and other times dark brown, which depended on whether she was standing next to a window or not, shone brightly in the sunlight. She smiled. Today would be a good day. She wouldn't be expanding her intelligence network. Instead, she had plans with her tomboyish roommate, something that she'd never expected would happen.

She gracefully walked across the room toward Iku. Her roommate had been so engrossed in conversation she didn't notice Asako until she grabbed her arm. "Shibasaki, can you please let me go? I'm *trying* to work here." She complied with Iku's request, but then started speaking softly. She whispered into Iku's ear. "It's today. We have to go to...*that place*." Iku's face turned bright red. She knew exactly what Asako was talking about. She slowly regained her composure. "Okay. I'll go back our room."

As they separated, each going their own way, the other librarians looked at them with questions on their minds. They thought Iku and Asako were going out or something, which seemed weird since each of them had men they had feelings for. Nothing could be further from the truth. Neither one had romantic, or sexual, feelings for each other. They were just tight as friends. Sometimes they communicated their affection and support for one another, in their own way, but their lips had never touched each other's skin, mouths, or anywhere else.

As Iku made her way back to the room she shared with Asako in Kanto Library Base, she thought about how unassuming, yet formidable, her friend could be. She was a bit nervous about what she would be doing with Asako. It was her *first time*. She'd never done it before with *anyone*. Perhaps she was like other Japanese women in this respect, who had only done this with up to five people by the time they were in their 20s or 30s.

Her friend had checked in with her, to make sure there wouldn't be any misunderstandings, tension, jealousy, mixed signals, or the end of their friendship. That's something neither one wanted. Not at all. However, each one saw this as an opportunity for increased bonding, reassurance, comfort, and expression of their affection. It was uncomfortable only in the sense they had *never* done this kind of thing with each other before. They couldn't do it public, as it would be scandalous. Even so, their clear trust, honesty, and communication made this possible without hurting one another.

Surreptitiously, Asako followed. She had originally planned to go on break at the same time as Iku, but as it happened, they both had time off, so they decided to use it for this. She breathed deeply. It would be one of the hardest things she'd ever done. She knew full well that if they did this in an open area, while working, they'd get unwanted attention, including from male employees who worked at the library. Surely she could exploit these employees when she needed to gather information, but this was not one of those times. She needed this to be in a private setting.

In no time at all, she made it up to the room she shared with Iku. She opened the door and saw Iku leaned up against the wall, sitting on her bed. She had changed into some silly night-shirt. Asako couldn't help but laugh. "Are you really wearing that?...I didn't know you liked

the Helluva Girls." Iku rolled her eyes. She knew that her friend could really be *too honest* sometimes. This was a shirt that her mother had got for her, saying that young people like this band. She didn't though. Despite that, she accepted the t-shirt anyway, not knowing how she could say no. She shrugged. Twirling her hair with her finger, she added, "I'm just...anxious about this...you know...it's my first time."

Her friend reassured her. *Everything* had to go smoothly for this work. There couldn't be any fuck-ups. "It's okay. It will be fine." She was ready. She asked the question. "Iku, can I kiss you?" The brown-haired woman nodded. Bringing her face closer, she sloppily smooched the other woman's cheek. She was relieved. Her friend had to remind her. "That's only the first part." Her friend's words made her a bit uneasy. She didn't want to mess this up either. She was ready. She used all her courage she could to keep going. "Okay. Here I go!" she exclaimed.

She planted a kiss on Asako's forehead. They would have moved away from each other, but the opposite happened. They sat next to one another on Iku's bed instead. Her friend began the conversation. "How was it...you know...the kiss?" Her friend laughed. She couldn't believe she was answering this awkward question. How could she answer it, *honestly*? "Well...I kinda liked it...I wish we could do it *every day*." Her friend was surprised. Did she need that much love and support? Perhaps she did. They could both show their care, respect, compassion, and affection for each other, while having each other's backs.

"We can...arrange that," Asako found herself saying, then added "I could *never* do this in public." Iku couldn't agree more. She joked about it. "You know, casual smooching is *all the rage* these days...but I'm not sure I'm at that level *yet*." Her friend laughed. She wasn't really at that level either. She was fine with their friendship being the way it was. She teased Iku. "Think about what the boys would say if we did this in front of them?...they'd be *so jealous* of us." Iku agreed. They would be jealous. Since they had a good time together, Iku suggested that *instead* of a sloppy kiss as a way to express their appreciation for each other, they could have light pecks on the cheek. It was known as esukīru (エスキール), a type of kiss between two people who know each other well enough and feel comfortable expressing affection for one another without being too intimate or inappropriate.

Surely if the men they had crushes on had kissed them instead, it would be different. A cheek or forehead kiss from them would be romantic and sexual, rather than one of deep, and sweet, affection, meant as a gesture of friendliness. Perhaps they'd even kiss each other on the back of the hand, although that probably wasn't in the cards. Some certainly said, with merit, that friends kissing one another could trigger issues of bonding and intimacy, leading to unintended sexual tension, with certain "limits" to platonic affection. That was unlikely in this case. Their kisses were not seen as a preamble to sexual intercourse, but about strengthening emotional connections and commitment.

When they first met, they certainly couldn't have done something like this. It would have been risky and inappropriate. They had to build up to it, with open communication to avoid any possible consequences. As they sat together on the bed, they came up with boundaries for how long each kiss would be, possible "safe zones" (cheeks, forehead, and backs of hands), no intimate kisses, respecting each other's wants and needs if someone wanted to stop, and considering their relationships with others, particularly with the library force. Some people,

certainly, kissed each other on the lips, as friends, but that was a bridge too far for them. If they did that, it could lead to unnecessary tension. They decided to stick to certain areas of the body, particularly the cheeks and each other's foreheads.

This was something that friends did with one another. In European and Latin American cultures, kissing was often used to greet friends or family members. In Japan, kissing was more often done in private, with other forms of affection instead, with Japanese culture more reserved when it came to public displays of affection.. However, young people, such as Iku and Asako, were changing those cultural norms. Even so, the cheek kiss was still, for them, an expression of their deep friendship rather than anything else. They wanted to tenderly, and sweetly, comfort each other, with the promise they were there for one another, to show emotional care, and that each one of them mattered. They had expressed this to each other in ways *other than* kissing in the past. Despite that, this was, in some ways, a big step forward for them.

Iku patted her friend on the back. "You did good. I'm glad we did this." Her friend smiled, and then turned to the subject of Iku's supervisor, the one who she now *knew* was her prince. She teased her about him. She loved doing that sometimes. "I am glad we did as well...anyway...you should tell Dojo what you are thinking and feeling." Iku was caught off guard by this. Her friend had certainly suggested she learn more about how so-called "normal" women fell in love before. She'd angrily dismissed that idea, even though she knew her friend was only trying to be helpful.

"Uh...I guess I can…" she started to say. "But *you* need to help me! We should you know...go out to a cafe and to the movies...and I can buy a gift for him or something." Her friend happily laughed. She couldn't believe she had taken off work to sit with her. She jested her about it. She couldn't resist doing so. "Oh, so are you *asking me out* on a date now? Are we going to buy some sexy underwear together or something?" Iku, clearly flustered, threw her pillow at her friend's face. She was tired at how Asako teased her like this. Over time, she had, mostly, gotten used to it.

She held up her hands like she was surrendering. "I mean...it's a friendly outing, with a beautiful woman *such as yourself*...someone who is really girly." Her friend chuckled heartily. Iku understood her. Surely, she took defending books just as seriously. Undoubtedly, she had a strong sense of justice when it came to protecting other people's freedom of expression. She'd put her life on the line for that. But Asako wasn't tomboyish. She was a much better student, better at combat, and better at shooting. She wasn't "book dumb" and wasn't idealistic. At the same time, she detested when people complimented her.

Since Iku had joined the library force, she helped her study, using the skills she had honed as a military intelligence informant, aware of facts that many others weren't aware of. She loved to crack sarcastic jokes, sometimes acting bluntly and sharing her true feelings. She tended to hide the latter so she could easily interact with others, allowing her to succeed in social situations. This came with a catch: she never trusted other people. As time went on, and after she met Iku, these feelings changed. She realized that Iku was the *one person* she wanted to be friends with, the *one person* she trusted. She was willing to look past her friend's flaws, and fatal mistakes, and stand by her.

"Okay, it's a date!" Asako exclaimed, to the utter annoyance of Iku, who playfully punched her in the arm. They knew they couldn't stay in their shared room, sitting on this bed, *forever*. They'd have to go back to work at some point. Until that happened, they enjoyed their time together, while it lasted...

End Notes

I had a lot of fun adding in a title, summary, and elements which made it seem the fic would go in a romantic direction and to turn around and be platonic instead! There is no doubt that this fic is fluff, i.e. feel-good, pleasant works with two or more characters in a romantic or non-romantic relationship, which can be gen (i.e. "no romantic or sexual content") or focus on family interactions, and be a work with uplifting and warm descriptions. It also is, in a sense, a sweet and happy story too, so it is fluffy. However, this fic is is not angst (i.e. "...intended to provoke the feeling of unrest and uncertainty in readers...signifies that the story will be primarily dramatic in nature, rather than comedic or light-hearted, and that characters may suffer mental or physical anguish during the course of the story...There also exist subgenres such as flangst (fluffy angst) and wangst (whiny angst)").

In my last fic for Flufftober, I said in the endnote that Elena and Naomi had a womance (also called "hermance" or "shemance"), referring to a close, but non-sexual, relationship between women, with deep and meaningful connections, a tight-knit bond, camaraderie, solidarity, female bonding, and possibly sisterhood. I would not say that Asako and Iku are at that point yet, but are only starting the process, with cheek kisses every day pushing that forward. In fact, I'd reason that their friendship will certainly grow stronger as they become closer, appreciating each other only in a way that other women can, seeing themselves as soul sisters or kindred spirits, courting one another "beyond the bonds of an ordinary friendship," drawn together in a nonsexual way. Such individuals can even call themselves girlfriends if they wish. Others say that womance is "a strong relationship between two straight women" but I don't think those within a womance have to be *necessarily* straight. Ultimately, I do agree, however, that there should be more womance and less bromance, which have appeared in some series but not a lot.

Otherwise, I would say that the relationship between Asako and Iku is only beginning to be queerplatonic, a term referring to emotional and physical intimacy between two or more individuals while they remain friends, and have outside romantic relationships, even if those involved consider themselves soulmates. It queers traditional platonic relationship structures, as one writer noted (see Ashton Strait's article on page 3 entitled "beyond bffs: cozying up to queerplatonic relationships"). Wiktionary defines the term as "not romantic and (usually) not sexual, but sharing a stronger emotional bond than typical in a friendship." Fanlore, for its part, says that the term is used to "describe a relationship between two or more people that deviates from what the people within the relationship deem to be strictly romantic or platonic" and notes it originates from aromantic people. As such, so many fanworks with these relationships often have "at least one character who identifies as such." Fanlore further notes that while the exact definition is vague, QPP serves as an abbreviation for "queerplatonic partner" while QPR serves as an abbreviation for "queerplatonic relationship."

Sadly, on April 17th, it was removed from that femslash fanfc site, when I was sadly perma-banned for mishandling interactions with a few users, despite apologizing to those users, removing certain passages of fics, and apologizing to the Sunset admin (and others). As such, I would strongly recommend **against** *anyone* joining that site, or Superlove. Both admins (Melo/Kat for Superlove, Agnes for Sunset) are friends with each other. Those admins are

very particular and not in a good way. I find the whole circumstance deeply unfortunate. I wish it could have been resolved a much better way.

Works inspired by this one

Iku's Nervousness, Asako's Joy, and a Date-Not-Date in Kantō by lefemmerouge2

The Librarian Tribunal Comes to Trolberg: Kaisa, Insidious Book Censors, and What Matters by lefemmerouge

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